b.) Remarks

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,228,804 to Nakashima. Additionally, claims 1-22 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-15 and 19-21 of Nakashima.

These rejections are respectfully traversed as both being based, respectfully submitted, upon a misunderstanding of either the present invention or the prior art, or possibly both. In any event, to clarify the record, the salient features of the present invention will be discussed in detail, so to better elucidate its patentable nature over the prior art.

The present invention provides a support with a porous resin layer (that changes transparency depending upon whether water is absorbed or not) and an opaque water repellant resin layer.

Nakashima provides a thermochromic layer and a hydrophilic porous layer. According to Nakashima, the thermochromic layer changes color depending on temperature. In Nakashima, water is applied to the thermochromic material for cooling (e.g., cold water) or heating (e.g., hot water). However, the principle of image appearance in the present invention is quite different from that of Nakashima. The claimed invention does not present an image by thermochromaticity. Instead, the porous layer is hydrophilic and becomes transparent when it absorbs water. Additionally, the water repellent layer[1/] repels water and makes no change and so, the latent image (which was invisible in water-unabsorbed state) now becomes visible.

In the Office Action, the Examiner states (at page 4, lines 10-12) "[t]he

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1/ The water repellent resin layer is formed by applying a water-repelling solution onto the porous resin layer as described, e.g., on page 13, line 10 et seq.

porous image pattern is made of the same material as Applicant and therefore functions as a water-repellant resin layer. This teaching therefore provides use of a second colored layer as in instant claim 4."

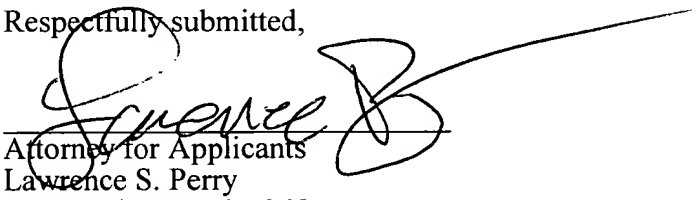
Nakashima simply does not teach or suggest Applicants' water repellant resin layer, or water repellent-treated resin layer. Indeed, Nakashima's "porous image pattern layer" and "thermochromic image pattern layer" are hydrophilic, and not water-repellent. That is to say, when water is applied in Nakashima, the "porous image pattern layer" and "thermochromic image pattern" respectively become transparent and changes color, while in the present invention the water-repellant layer merely repels water and effects no optical change.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's concerns should now be overcome on the record and the claims ready for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and prompt passage to issue this application is earnestly solicited.

Claims 1-10 remain presented for continued prosecution.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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